

From: Jeff Ferland
To: Microsoft ATR
Date: 1/16/02 4:23pm
Subject: Public comment on case

I find there to be two reasonable courses of action to take on this issue, the first being less severe, more fair, and more generic; while the second is almost extreme.

My first reaction is to ban any agreement that forces you to buy an operating system with a computer, and if you opt to not take the offer then the cost of the operating system should not be charged to you. The same ought to apply for bundled software. It is certainly unfair to me to when I go to buy a laptop to know that I must pay what many Unix computer professionals have come to refer to as a "Microsoft Tax." Linux seems much more suited to me and having to pay for another operating system of which I have no intent of using is incredible (this also applies for those of us who already own a license for Windows that is not being used and would prefer to spare themselves the expense of paying for something twice). I can't see this as being anything but fair and competitive as there is no single common computer architecture for which only one operating system is capable of running on.

In addition to the above, I would also find it beneficial should Microsoft (specifically this time) be prohibited from bundling any of their products together at reduced cost. The cost of a complete office suite should be the same as the individual ones, and the same goes for their browser which should not be integral to the operating system. Windows ought to be available without Internet Explorer, and should also cost less without it (though I don't see any argument to it being downloadable for free).

My second and much more drastic suggestion is the corporate death penalty. Basically the revocation of Microsoft's corporate charter. All their code would be forced open and placed on publicly accessible servers that will be maintained from some of Microsoft's resources. Their physical parts (computers and such) would be sold at a public online auction.

In any case, my belief is that the suggestions I have presented first should be instated. My second suggestions should be weighed carefully and I make no movement to support them - they are merely presented as a possible solution as it is not my right to make such a decision.

-Jeff
SIG: HUP

PS - Just another computer user that doesn't think corporations should be allowed to tax you for what they don't own.

